

APPROVED JANUARY 13, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 7:12 PM by Chairman Charles Kimball. Present were Andy Kohlhofer, Mike Nygren, Doug McElroy, Pat Martel, Rich Violette, School Board Representative Peg Pinkham, Selectman Donald Gates, Town Administrator Heidi Carlson and Recording Secretary Jeanne Nygren.

The information that Kohlhofer requested from the Town Clerk was passed out by Carlson. Additional information on the upcoming Warrants and Town budget reports were also provided. Carlson said she is working to get a draft of the MS7 and the updated revenue pages done for the Committee. Carlson attended the DRA workshop on the Warrant and said there are some changes made on the draft. A major change was on Article 4, which is the Budget Committee's line for their recommendation. She is also working with what the default budget would be. This is challenging to come up with the calculations to get the figures for the default budget, and identifying a one time purchased article makes this difficult to come up with the figure.

The Police Department budget that was tabled last meeting was discussed. A discussion occurred on the purchase of the vehicle for the Animal Control Officer. This was originally going to be a warrant article but Chief Janvrin was able to find a good used vehicle for \$6,000.00 with low mileage and used unspent portions of his budget to purchase this vehicle. This was presented to the Selectmen for their approval and the accounts used for charging this purchase against. In regards to the wage issue, Gates said that the Selectmen decided that their goal was to forego a cost of living raise in 2009 and get employees on the new matrix. On the normal anniversary time there will be no step raise and a new anniversary period will begin for each employee at the beginning of each year. They need to be in the position for one year under the new matrix. Police Department wages are an issue. The Committee then referred to the spreadsheet Martel prepared that Carlson passed out. They calculated a rate close to the present rate or had to split the difference in some instances to place them in the matrix with some type of raise. Kohlhofer asked if this includes step raises also. Nygren said having the different anniversary dates would make it difficult and if this passes then all their anniversary dates will be January 1st to be simpler for tracking.

Renee King from the Parks and Recreation Department came into the meeting at 7:20 PM to answer questions from the Budget Committee and discuss some of the proposed cuts from the Parks budget. In Line 4520 the Budget Committee recommended to cut this budget line by \$8,026.00. There was a lengthy discussion on a half day summer program due to the decrease in enrollment, to keep the cost down. Pinkham wanted to get the recreation program to have access for all of the community and if enrollment goes down then fewer are taking advantage of it. King said they didn't want this known as a Day Care Program. Since it started about 10 years ago the charge has gone up, and it is now \$95.00 for the cost for a week, which now includes field trips. There is also before and after care offered at an additional cost to the parents. Also having the time set from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM is difficult for working parents. King said enrollment has gone down. They have tried to review figures through the years on attendance and are hoping this year will have an increase in enrollment going by the number of students enrolled at Ellis in the grades that usually attend this summer program. King feels having a half day program is difficult for parents to use if they work. She thought maybe taking it down from 6 weeks to 4 weeks and she asked if there were any other options the Committee may suggest. She agreed that counselors get well paid but have a large responsibility. Pinkham asked if there was a mission statement as to the purpose, and for the community to partake and maybe this should not be a Town funded program. King feels people were sending kids to other camps, such as soccer, golf and other camps and that could have had a factor in the figures being down. The sign up for a day program was reviewed.

King said they preregister for a week at a time or three weeks at a time. They do two field trips and two bus trips a week as they get free park passes. Kohlhofer stated if they cut the field trips by 50% it wouldn't work out because one trip is free to the State parks. Nygren feels that parents are forced to choose due to the economy what they choose for elective activities. Maybe by running a half day enrollment might bring a larger number of participants because the cost will be less. King said that the

Director is very creative and runs a good program and maybe she could put out a survey for informational purposes, but this wouldn't help in this budget process.

Kohlhofer recapped what the Budget Committee is doing as far as cutting their budget and he knows that they can spend what they want and how they want because of the bottom line budget figure. Kimball thought a pre registration could be at one rate, and a last minute sign up could be at a higher rate, as a consideration. Kohlhofer thinks the Committee should cut the budget this year and then try to find out why the children are not coming. They also discussed the movie night, and the Red Sox game nights. The Committee thanked King for coming in tonight and she left the meeting at 8:00 PM.

Carlson said the only outstanding item is for the Budget Committee to make a recommendation on the Police Budget. Carlson thought they still needed to go through the training line. Kohlhofer motioned to cut the training to 8 hours a year to be in line with Statute requirements. Janvrin budgeted for 40 hours of which 16 is firearms. The Committee recommended a change in the in service training line 4210-203 at a previous meeting. A motion to recommend \$3,000.00 was made by Kohlhofer, seconded by Violette. The vote was unanimously approved 8-0. Janvrin requested \$5,458.00; the Budget Committee recommended \$2,413.00.

Kohlhofer started to go through the Police Department budget by line item starting with 4210-101 Clerical wages. The Selectmen recommend \$27,498.00. For the total patrol wages the Selectmen recommended \$235,954.00. Carlson cleared that the Selectmen recommended putting everyone into the new matrix on an annualized basis. They will get one jump next year and only once a year it would be done. A motion to recommend \$235,954.00 for the patrol wage budget line 4210-301 was made by McElroy, seconded by Gates. The vote was unanimous 8-0.

The Budget Committee discussed the fuel line in depth and decided to just watch this account by the usage where the price of fuel has been so volatile. The total patrol budget recommendation by the Selectmen was \$395,201.00. Pinkham suggested one time item expenses be highlighted to make it easier to prepare the default budget for Carlson next year. Gates said any line item changes should be brought before the Selectmen and Budget Committee before any money is moved from accounts.

A motion of \$393,101.00 for total operating budget for the Police Department was made by McElroy and seconded by Martel. The vote was unanimously approved 8-0.

Carlson went through Article 23, regarding a change in the Statute regarding the Cable Access Town Trust Fund. The Legislation had changed and a better idea is to make this a revolving fund. This sets it up as its own fund for use to purchase items related to cable access. DRA suggests this be set up as a revolving fund and this won't have to go on the Warrant again. This is money that comes in from Cable franchise fees. This amount is up to \$25,000.00. McElroy asked if this gives the Cable Committee liberty to spend as they want. Carlson said this has to go through the Selectmen for approval. Kohlhofer asked if they need to make a motion on this article. McElroy motioned to recommend supporting this as a revolving fund which is not raised by taxation, Pinkham seconded. The vote was unanimous 8-0.

Kimball asked when they have to sign up for Budget Committee open positions. Carlson said there are 3 positions open, one is the appointed position Violette is holding for 2 years, and 2 three year positions. The sign up period with the Town Clerk is January 21 through January 30.

Carlson asked what else is needed from her for the Public Hearing. Kimball asked if there was a snow date scheduled for the School Public Hearing. Carlson said it would be Tuesday, February 10, 2009. She also said that the date for the snow date for the Town's Deliberative Session has to be changed as the law states this has to take place within 72 hours of the first session. A date of February 2, 2009 will be posted for this snow date.

A motion to approve the minutes of the December 29, 2009 meeting, as written was made by McElroy, seconded by Nygren. Both Violette and Pinkham abstained as they were absent. The vote was approved 6-0.

The Committee set the dates of January 19, January 21, January 26, January 28 and February 4 to work on the School budget.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Kohlhofer and seconded Nygren. The vote was unanimous 8-0 and the meeting adjourned at 9:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Nygren
Recording Secretary